

Agenda Item: IV.

DATE: April 20, 2006

SUBJECT: Minority Teacher Education Awards

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Minority Teacher Education Grant program is a matching grant program that supports pilot projects designed to expand the recruitment pool for minority teachers throughout the state. All Tennessee higher education institutions with approved teacher certification programs are eligible to apply. Successful proposals included the following components:

- Recruitment strategies targeting non-traditional groups (e.g., teacher aides, substitute teachers, in-school suspension teachers, and ex-military personnel presently not certified);
- Intervention strategies for successful test completion; and
- Partnerships with local k-12 education agencies.

This program, created and funded by the Tennessee Legislature, has been administered by the Commission since 1989. The 2005-2006 appropriation totals \$212,000.

An advisory committee reviewed the 11 proposals submitted and recommended nine projects to the Executive Director totaling \$212,000. The projects selected represent a variety of innovative approaches in public and private institutions covering a broad geographical area. Summaries of the projects follow.

The Advisory Committee consisted of:

Dr. William Arnold, Director of Interagency Grants and Academic Programs, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Dr. Ronald Williams, Educational Specialist, Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Dr. S. Kay Clark, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Tennessee Board of Regents

Dr. MaryJo Howland, Deputy Executive Director, Policy and Research, State Board of Education

Mr. Morgan Branch, Director of Minority Teacher Recruitment/Retention, State Department of Education

Ms. Hazel Thomas, Consultant, State Department of Education

Dr. Claude Pressnell, President, Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association

Mr. Eugene Howard Wade, Assistant Human Resources Director, Williamson County Schools

Mr. Terrance Gibson, Associate Executive Director, Tennessee Education Association

Ms. Laura Nick, Memphis City Schools

Ms. Phyllis Qualls-Brooks, Assistant Commissioner, Tourist Development

2006-2007 MINORITY TEACHER EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT GRANTS

AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Heraldo V. Richards

Project MORE: Preparing Minorities to be Outstanding Responsible Educators

Project MORE focuses on (a) recruiting committed African American candidates to the teaching profession; (b) providing them with a coordinated support system; (c) immersing them in a rigorous, well-rounded teacher education program, emphasizing sensitivity to diversity, technological competency, and best teaching practices; and (d) ultimately placing these well-prepared practitioners in our school system.

Funds Recommended \$15,705

CRICHTON COLLEGE

Dr. Greg Freeman

Minority Teacher Education Program

The objective of the Crichton College Minority Teacher Education Program is to increase the number of minority students completing licensure programs by addressing the areas where students are unsuccessful in completing the Teacher Education Program, presenting passing scores in one or more subtests of the Praxis I, inability to pass one or more of the relevant Praxis II exams and inability to cope with the overall college experience through coursework, workshops, tutoring, academic advising and mentoring.

Funds Recommended \$26,100

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. E. Jane Melendez

Project MOST: Minority Opportunities for Success in Teaching

The objective of Project MOST is to identify a pool of potential candidates, who are non-traditional minority students, moving them toward attainment of teaching positions in East Tennessee. Some of the non-traditional minority students will be recruited into the teacher education master's degree program, which will lead to initial licensure. Preference will be given to Tennessee residents. A large number of organizations and individuals will be asked to assist in recruiting potential participants. This program will provide extensive support in academic advising and mentoring, social activities, assistance in preparation for Praxis exams, quality field experiences and student teaching assignments in the partnering school districts.

Funds Recommended \$25,686

FREED-HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY

Dr. Ronald P. Butterfield

Minority Teacher Recruitment and Training Initiative

The program will provide the opportunity for highly talented prospective minority teachers to enter the teaching profession and financial and mentoring resources to enable the “brightest and best” minority candidates to teach in Tennessee public school classrooms. Freed-Hardeman University constantly seeks opportunities to encourage highly promising potential teachers to spend their professional careers in Tennessee. The collaborative involvement of the West Tennessee Public School Districts lends a strength that can make this initiative work.

Funds Recommended \$29,928

LANE COLLEGE

Dr. Vicki Vernon Lott

Lane College Minority Teacher Education Project

The primary goals of the Lane College Minority Teacher Education Project (LCMTEP) are to increase the likelihood that Lane College students in the Teacher Education program will complete their degree program, and be prepared as teachers in grades K-12 by passing initial teacher licensure examinations; and to increase the likelihood that minority college graduates in the Jackson area seeking initial teacher licensure will successfully complete initial licensure examinations.

Funds Recommended \$23,622

MILLIGAN COLLEGE

Dr. Billye Joyce Fine

Minority Teacher Education Project

Milligan College will utilize a Minority Council to recruit and select participants for this project. The goal of the program is to recruit non-traditional minority students for a two-year certification process. During the Fall and Spring semesters, professional course work will accompany a year long internship in a partner school. In the concluding summer of professional studies, emphasis is on the completion of action research projects and licensure requirements. In addition, the program offers academic advisement, mentoring, and tutoring for national exams.

Funds Recommended \$16,591

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Ms. Bonnie Cummings
Dr. Karen Weddle-West

Project Licensure: Preparing Practicing Non-Licensed Minority Teachers for Licensure and Permanent School Placement

The major goal of this program is to increase the number of African-American teachers in Memphis in collaboration with the Memphis City Schools. A significant component of the program is to better enable the students to pass the required national exams for licensure, which includes participation in intensive clinical experiences prior to teaching. Opportunities are provided for the students to become oriented to the program and to participate in cooperative learning. Project Licensure will give students the skills to positively address the academic needs of children in poverty, demonstrate effective use of strategies for a multicultural population, and demonstrate an understanding of the special needs of urban schools and communities they serve.

Funds Recommended \$22,068

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA

Dr. Jane Brower

Each One Reach One – Minority Male Educator Project

This program is based on the premise that an effective prevention model must begin early with young children. That belief is the reason the project is focused on the placement of African-American males in the elementary school setting. The project will provide more opportunities for young children to associate with positive role models, a situation absent from the lives of many children today. Each One Reach One graduates are making significant contributions to children beyond the classroom, i.e. participating in an after school tutoring program sponsored by the Urban League.

Funds Recommended \$24,300

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT KNOXVILLE

Dr. Vena M. Long

African-American Teacher Intern Project

The goal of this program is to fund fourteen African-American degreed students who have completed all undergraduate prerequisites and are who are ready to enter graduate level teaching internships. The layout of the internship has been developed in accordance with state guidelines and by ongoing collaboration of many school-based professionals, system officials and college representatives.

Funds Recommended \$28,100